

**CLAIMS**

5           1. A method of transferring at least one digital signal representing media  
content data in a communication network, the network comprising a client server  
device connected to at least one client station, at least one destination server  
device connected to at least one destination station wherein, when the client  
station receives a request to transfer a digital signal intended for at least one  
10 destination station, the client server device:

- obtains a first encryption key further to the transfer request;
- obtains the digital signal;
- encodes said digital signal with the first encryption key obtained;
- encodes the first encryption key with a second encryption key associated  
15 with the destination server device connected to the corresponding destination  
station;
- transfers the encoded digital signal to said destination server device;
- transfers the encoded first encryption key to said destination server  
device.

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          2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the client server device also  
determines, from the transfer request, whether information representing at least  
one restriction on use by a destination station exists and, if so, encodes the  
information representing at least one restriction with the second key associated  
25 with the destination server device of the corresponding destination station and  
transfers the encoded information to the destination server device.

3. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the said digital signal is stored in advance on the client server.

4. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the transfer of the encoded  
5 signal to the said destination station is made by means of a centralized server device connected to the network.

5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the first key is a secret key and the second key is a public key associated with the destination server device.

10 6. A method according to Claim 5, wherein the public key is obtained by reading a storage means of the client server device or by generating a request on the communication network to the centralized server device or the destination server device.

15 7. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the information representing at least one restriction forms part of the group of restrictions on the duration of authorization for the display of the at least one digital signal by the destination station, the storage of the at least one digital signal by the destination station and  
20 the printing of the at least one digital signal by the destination station.

8. A method of transferring at least one first digital signal representing media content data and which has been encoded using a first encryption key, in a communication network, the network comprising a client server device, and at least  
25 one destination server device connected to at least one destination station, wherein, when the client server device transfers the at least one digital signal encoded with the first encryption key to the at least one destination server device connected to the at least one destination terminal, the destination server device:

- stores the signal transmitted by the client server device;

- obtains the first encryption key by decoding, by means of a second key, a message received from the client server device,

- decodes the stored digital signal by means of the first encryption key, and

5 - transfers at least one second decoded digital signal representing a sub-part of the first digital signal representing media content data to at least one destination station.

10 9. A method according to Claim 8, wherein the first digital signal representing media content data is at a first resolution and in that the destination server device also determines whether information representing at least one restriction associated with at least one destination station has been transferred by the client server device and, if so, generates the second decoded digital signal at a resolution lower than the first resolution of the first digital signal representing media content data.

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20 10. A method according to Claim 9, wherein the destination server device also determines whether information representing the at least one restriction has been transferred by the client server device and, in the negative, the destination server device transfers the second digital signal representing the whole of the first digital signal.

25 11. A method according to Claim 8, wherein, on reception of a request to transfer the signal transmitted by the client server device to another destination station not associated with the destination server device, the destination server device obtains a third key associated with the destination server device associated with the other destination station, encodes the first key with the third key and transfers the first digital signal encoded with the first key and the first key encoded with the third key.

12. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal representing media content data in a communication network between a client module and at least one destination module, the modules being connected to the network, wherein when it receives a request to transfer the digital signal to at least one destination module, the client module:

- obtains the digital signal;
- obtains a first encryption key;
- encodes the digital signal with the first encryption key;
- obtains information for the restriction on the use of the digital signal by the destination module, for which the digital signal is intended to be sent;
- encodes the first encryption key and the use restriction information with a second encryption key associated with the destination module;
- transfers the encoded digital signal to the destination module;
- transfers the first encryption key and the use restriction information encoded with the second encryption key to the destination module.

13. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 12, wherein the destination module comprises a destination server connected to the network and at least one destination client connected to the destination server.

14. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 13, wherein the second encryption key is associated with the destination server.

15. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 13, wherein the restriction use information comprises information for the restriction on the use of the digital signal by the at least one destination client, for which the digital signal is intended.

16. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 12, wherein the use restriction information comprises the specification of rights for copying or storing or reproducing or printing the at least one digital signal, the time validity of said rights, the specification of the resolution under which the digital signal should be accessed.

17. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 12, wherein the first key is a secret key, and the second key is a public key associated with the destination module.

18. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 17, wherein the public key is obtained by reading storage means of the client module or by generating a request on the communication network to a centralized server or to the destination module.

19. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 12, wherein the use restriction information comprises a request for the destination module to transfer the digital signal encoded with the first key to at least a second destination module.

20. A method for the transfer of at least one first digital signal representing digital media content data and which has been encoded using a first encryption key, in a communication network between a client module and at least one destination module, the modules being connected to the network, wherein, when the client module transfers the encoded first digital signal to the destination module, the destination module:

- stores the first digital signal encoded with the first key;

- obtains the first key and information for the restriction on the use of the digital signal by the destination module, by decoding a message transmitted by the client module, with a second key associated with the destination module;

5       - decodes the stored first digital signal with the first key, taking into account at least part of the use restriction information, into a second digital signal representing at least part of the first digital signal.

10       21. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 20, wherein the destination module comprises a destination server connected to the network and at least one destination client connected to the destination server.

15       22. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 21, wherein at least part of the second digital signal is transferred to at least one of the destination stations.

23. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 21, wherein the second key is associated with the destination server.

20       24. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 21, wherein the restriction use information comprises information for the restriction on the use of the first digital signal by the at least one destination client, for which the digital signal is intended.

25       25. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 20, wherein the use restriction information comprises the specification of rights for copying or storing or reproducing or printing the at least one digital signal, the time validity of said rights, the specification of the resolution under which the digital signal should be accessed.

26. A method for the transfer of at least one digital signal according to Claim 20, wherein upon reception of a request to transfer the first digital signal encoded with the first key to at least one second destination module, the destination module;

- obtains a third key associated with the at least one second destination module;

- encodes the first key and information for the restriction on the use of the at least one second destination module, with the third key;

- transfers the first digital signal encoded with the first key to the destination module;

- transfers the first key and use restriction information encoded with the third key to the at least one second destination module.

27. A device for transferring at least one digital signal representing media content data in a communication network, the network comprising a client server device connected to at least one client station, at least one destination server device connected to at least one destination station wherein, the client station receiving a request to transfer a digital signal intended for at least one destination station, the client server device comprises:

- means for obtaining a first encryption key further to the transfer request;

- means for obtaining the digital signal;

- means for encoding said digital signal with the first encryption key obtained;

- means for encoding the first encryption key with a second encryption key associated with the destination server device connected to the corresponding destination station;

- means for transferring the encoded digital signal to said destination server device;

- means for transferring the encoded first encryption key to said destination server device.

5 28. A device according to Claim 27, wherein the client server device also comprises means for determining, from the transfer request, whether information representing at least one restriction on use by a destination station exists and means for encoding the information representing at least one restriction with the second key associated with the destination server device of the corresponding destination station and means for transferring the encoded information to the  
10 destination server device.

29. A device according to Claim 27, wherein the device also comprises means for storing said digital signal.

15 30. A device according to Claim 27, wherein the transfer of the encoded signal to the said destination station is made by means of a centralized server device connected to the network.

20 31. A device according to Claim 27, wherein the first key is a secret key and the second key is a public key associated with the destination server device.

25 32. A device according to Claim 31, wherein the means for obtaining the public key is adapted to obtain the key by reading a storage means of the client server device or by generating a request on the communication network to the centralized server device or the destination server device.

33. A device according to Claim 28, wherein the information representing at least one restriction forms part of the group of restrictions on the duration of authorization for the display of the at least one digital signal by the destination



station, the storage of the at least one digital signal by the destination station and the printing of the at least one digital signal by the destination station.

5 34. A device for transferring at least one first digital signal representing media content data and which has been encoded using a first encryption key, in a communication network, the network comprising a client server device, and at least one destination server device connected to at least one destination station, wherein, the client server device transferring the at least one digital signal encoded with the first encryption key to the at least one destination server device connected  
10 to the at least one destination terminal, the destination server device comprises:

- means for storing the signal transmitted by the client server device;
- means for obtaining the first encryption key by decoding, by means of a second key, a message received from the client server device,
- 15 - means for decoding the stored digital signal by means of the first encryption key, and
- means for transferring at least one second decoded digital signal representing a sub-part of the first digital signal representing media content data to at least one destination station.

20 35. A device according to Claim 34, wherein the first digital signal representing media content data is at a first resolution and in that the destination server device also comprises means for determining whether information representing at least one restriction associated with at least one destination station has been transferred by the client server device and means for generating the  
25 second decoded digital signal at a resolution lower than the first resolution of the first digital signal representing media content data.

36. A device according to Claim 35, wherein the destination server device also comprises means for determining whether information representing the at

least one restriction has been transferred by the client server device and means for transferring the second digital signal representing the whole of the first digital signal.

5           36. A device according to Claim 34, wherein, the destination server device receiving a request to transfer the signal transmitted by the client server device to another destination station not associated with the destination server device, the destination server device comprises means for obtaining a third key associated with the destination server device associated with the other destination station,  
10           means for encoding the first key with the third key and means for transferring the first digital signal encoded with the first key and the first key encoded with the third key.

15           37. A device for transferring at least one digital signal representing media content data in a communication network between a client module and at least one destination module, the modules being connected to the network, wherein the client module receiving a request to transfer the digital signal to at least one destination module, the client module comprises:

- means for obtaining the digital signal;
- 20           - means for obtaining a first encryption key;
- means for encoding the digital signal with the first encryption key;
- means for obtaining information for the restriction on the use of the digital signal by the destination module, for which the digital signal is intended to be sent;
- means for encoding the first encryption key and the use restriction  
25           information with a second encryption key associated with the destination module;
- means for transferring the encoded digital signal to the destination module;
- means for transferring the first encryption key and the use restriction information encoded with the second encryption key to the destination module.

38. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 37, wherein the destination module comprises a destination server connected to the network and at least one destination client connected to the destination server.

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39. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 38, wherein the second encryption key is associated with the destination server.

10 40. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 38, wherein the restriction use information comprises information for the restriction on the use of the digital signal by the at least one destination client, for which the digital signal is intended.

15 41. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 37, wherein the use restriction information comprises the specification of rights for copying or storing or reproducing or printing the at least one digital signal, the time validity of said rights, the specification of the resolution under which the digital signal should be accessed.

20 42. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 37, wherein the first key is a secret key, and the second key is a public key associated with the destination module.

25 43. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 42, wherein the means for obtaining the public key is adapted to obtain the key by reading storage means of the client module or by generating a request on the communication network to a centralized server or to the destination module.

44. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 37, wherein the use restriction information comprises a request for the destination module to transfer the digital signal encoded with the first key to at least one second destination module.

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45. A device for transferring at least one first digital signal representing digital media content data and which has been encoded using a first encryption key, in a communication network between a client module and at least one destination module, the modules being connected to the network, wherein, the client module transferring the encoded first digital signal to the destination module, the destination module comprises:

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- means for storing the first digital signal encoded with the first key;

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- means for obtaining the first key and information for the restriction on the use of the digital signal by the destination module, by decoding a message transmitted by the client module, with a second key associated with the destination module;

- means for decoding the stored first digital signal with the first key, taking into account at least part of the use restriction information, into a second digital signal representing at least part of the first digital signal.

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46. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 45, wherein the destination module comprises a destination server connected to the network and at least one destination client connected to the destination server.

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47. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 46, wherein at least part of the second digital signal is transferred to at least one of the destination stations.

48. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 46, wherein the second key is associated with the destination server.

5 49. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 46, wherein the restriction use information comprises information for the restriction on the use of the first digital signal by the at least one destination client, for which the digital signal is intended.

10 50. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 45, wherein the use restriction information comprises the specification of rights for copying or storing or reproducing or printing the at least one digital signal, the time validity of said rights, the specification of the resolution under which the digital signal should be accessed.

15 51. A device for transferring at least one digital signal according to Claim 45, wherein the destination module receiving a request to transfer the first digital signal encoded with the first key to at least one second destination module, the destination module comprises:

20 - means for obtaining a third key associated with the at least one second destination module;

- means for encoding the first key and information for the restriction on the use of the at least one second destination module, with the third key;

- means for transferring the first digital signal encoded with the first key to the destination module;

25 - means for transferring the first key and use restriction information encoded with the third key to the at least one second destination module.

52. An information carrier, possibly totally or partially removable, which can be read by a computer system, wherein it contains instructions of a computer program for implementing the transfer method according to Claim 1.

5 53. A computer program stored on an information carrier, said program comprising instructions for implementing the transfer method according to Claim 1 when it is loaded and executed by a computer system.

10 54. An information carrier, possibly totally or partially removable, which can be read by a computer system, characterized in that it contains instructions of a computer program for implementing a transfer method according to Claim 8.

15 55. A computer program stored on an information carrier, said program comprising instructions for implementing the transfer method according to Claim 8 when it is loaded and executed by a computer system.

20 56. An information carrier, possibly totally or partially removable, which can be read by a computer system, characterized in that it contains instructions of a computer program for implementing a transfer method according to Claim 12.

57. A computer program stored on an information carrier, said program comprising instructions for implementing the transfer method according to Claim 12 when it is loaded and executed by a computer system.

25 58. An information carrier, possibly totally or partially removable, which can be read by a computer system, characterized in that it contains instructions of a computer program for implementing a transfer method according to Claim 20.

59. A computer program stored on an information carrier, said program comprising instructions for implementing the transfer method according to Claim 20 when it is loaded and executed by a computer system.